# Assistive Technology Advisory Committee (ATAC)

# Meeting Minutes

**Tuesday, December 21, 2021, from 9:30 am to 4:00pm**

<https://www.dor.ca.gov/boards-and-committees/ATAC>

**Participate by Video Conference**

[https://dor-ca-gov.zoom.us/j/81442521051?pwd=ZzZjOGp2bjg3NnFycUxxVHVaYXNSdz09](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdor-ca-gov.zoom.us%2Fj%2F81442521051%3Fpwd%3DZzZjOGp2bjg3NnFycUxxVHVaYXNSdz09&data=04%7C01%7CKarl.Ortega%40dor.ca.gov%7Cd1bd2af837634dfb276f08d9b4210b63%7C19ed70549d9743c792b16781b6b95b68%7C0%7C0%7C637738876274917587%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=UM3%2BSmwmPTpTaSXPYXoTZZCa0ym89TdOUGK%2B3pOXdJk%3D&reserved=0)

**Participate by Teleconference**

Call: +1 (408) 638-0968 Meeting ID**:** 814 4252 1051 Passcode**:** 77617955

**Committee Members (present or joined remotely)**

* Kathleen Barajas
* Jennifer Buzolich, California Department of Education
* Gloria Certvantes
* Keith Ellis
* Larry Grable
* Ray Grott, Chair, Assistive Technology Advisory Committee
* NickoleRenee Mensch
* April Shin, Cerritos College, Norwalk, California
* Jennifer Walsh, Co-Chair Assistive Technology Advisory Committee

**DOR Staff (present or joined remotely)**

* Ana Acton, Deputy Director, Independent Living Community Access Division (ILCAD)
* Jocelyne O’Toole, Program Manager
* Karl Ortega, AT Grant Administrator
* Timothy Burkhart, Voice Options Program
* Elizabeth Wood, Voice Options Program

**CFILC Staff (present or joined remotely)**

* Christina Mills, California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC) Executive Director
* Kathrine Crowley, CFILC Ability Program Manager
* Megan Cowdell, CFILC Deputy Director

**Agenda Item 1: Call to order**

Chair Grott called the meeting to order at 9:42 am

### **Agenda Item 2: Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Grott welcomed all ATAC members and members introduced themselves.

**Agenda Item 3: Review and Approve Review September 29, 2021, Meeting Minutes**

**Motion:** Member Grable made a motion to accept the minutes and member Jolley seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a 8-0-0 vote. (Yes – Members: Barajas, Certvantes, Ellis, Grable, Grott, Jolley, Shin, and Walsh), (No – Members: 0), (Abstain – Members: 0), (Member Buzolich was absent at time of vote).

**Agenda Item 4: DOR Departmental and Programmatic Updates**

ILCAD Deputy Director Acton welcomed advisory members and introduced Lisa Niegel, DOR Chief Counsel of Legal Affairs and Regulations who discussed some conceptual frameworks for competitive grant regulations she is working on. Chief Counsel Niegel discussed the 2018 State Audit report and identified two specific actions: DOR to adopt the Grant Solicitation Process and Adopt the Revelations. In 2018, DOR engaged with various community stakeholders to develop and reform the interim Grant Solicitation Manual.

Chief Counsel Niegel discussed the seven key elements and guiding principles around the conceptual regulation’s framework, and she explained there must be fairness and transparency needed to strike a balance between specificity and flexibility. The seven elements include:

1. To ensure consistence in the grant process that allows for additional requirements or elements to be added based on the specific of the program needs.
2. Require a better conference to be held in every Request for Application (RFA) process. The Bidder’s Conference provides the opportunity for interested parties to pose questions, get meaningful responses.
3. Include an administrative review process for applications submitted to determine if all eligibility and application requirements were met prior to the evaluation panel review. The application requirements meeting

Contains all the elements that are required before application submission.

1. Identify the conditions for the applications that will be disqualified.

Be transparent so that everyone knows in advance what the required

conditions are.

1. Identify the requirements for the evaluation process, including the requirements for the evaluation panel, confidentiality requirements, and disqualified persons of interest and bias.
2. Identify the procedures for the evaluation and post evaluation process to ensure that the evaluation panel follows all the established procedures including procedures for application appeal process with stated timelines.
3. Review of the grant committee and the elements that must be included in every grant review committee decision.

The seven elements above will be included in the proposed regulations. ATAC members, other advisory bodies and members of public are encouraged to review and provide comments to this essential component to the rulemaking process. The public comment will be at least 45 days in length and may include public hearings on the specific proposed regulations.

Deputy Director Acton provided some key DOR updates on AT Act Funding from the state as a competitive betting process approximate every five years. CFILC is the current Assistive Technology Grantee. To find out more about the California AT Program visit the website at: <https://abilitytools.org/>.

DOR has been involved in the Career Pathways Initiative where people with disabilities are provided job experience through multiple entry points. One pathway is through the Limited Examination of Appointment Program (LEAP). The LEAP Program is a recruitment and hiring program for individuals with disabilities. Instead of taking the traditional state civil service exam, an individual can show their knowledge and skills for a job through on-the-job testing. DOR must certify a candidate meets the disability requirements to be eligible for a LEAP class exam. For more information, speak with a DOR counselor to find out more about obtaining a LEAP certification.

DOR is also focusing on an employee incentive program that will shift the paradigm that employers should hire people with disabilities. Employers are also engaged in this undertaking on diversity and inclusion as it relates to hiring people with disabilities. On the employment side, DOR is focusing on the buying power of people with disabilities and their supports. On the Independent Living and Community Access Division (ILCAD), provides the compliance funding to over 20 Independent d Living Centers through the state and Six Brain Injury Programs.

ILCAD also supports a Youth Leadership Program through the California Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (YLF). The YLF Program is for youth who are in high school or about to graduate from high school. The YLF Program provides monthly workshops that focus on post-secondary education, work experience, careers and self-advocacy. Delegates learn advocacy and leadership skills from alumni and professionals with disabilities and create a “Personal Care Leadership Plan” to help reach their future education, independent living and career goals. Applications are available on the website at: <https://dor.ca.gov/Home/Ylf> . The deadline to apply was extended to Friday, March 25, 2022.

ILCAD also provides a variety of different training opportunities through the Disability Access Services section. This section serves as a resource that provides public information, consultation, training and technical assistance to state and local government, consumers, employers and business to help prevent accessibility issues. Some technical training includes creating accessible documents in Microsoft Office. To find out more about these opportunities, visit the DOR website at: <https://dor.ca.gov/Home/DisabilityAccessServices>

There was discussion on Covid-19 and the 20% increase in the number of consumers served last year during the Pandemic. Independent Living Centers worked collectively to identify unmet needs in the local communities and then worked to stand up programs and supports to address those unmet needs. The primary unmet needs in California were: Transportation, access to food, access to personal protective equipment and housing. There are 28 Independent Living Centers providing required services and all the data reported by the centers is not being captured on the annual AT Report that is required by the AT Act. There is an opportunity for DOR and the IL Community to coordinate and collaborate on the best way to streamline and ensure that we are collecting all the right data that can be used to report all AT Activities on the annual AT Act Program Report.

**Agenda Item 5: Quarterly Report from Voice Options Program, DOR**

Grant Administrator Elizabeth Woods provided members with a Voice Options update, and she explained that the Voice Options Program provides a free speech generating devices to Californian’s who cannot speak or have difficulty speaking.

The Voice Options Team served over 776 consumers that have either completed a short-term loan or in the process of obtaining a long-term loan. The number of Voice Options Providers increased to 24 with the addition of United Cerebral Palsy of San Diego. Voice Options is now available in 46 counties throughout California.

A new Speech Application was just added to the Voice Options line-up called Prologquo2Go because consumers have requested this popular speech application. The Voice Options Team held a provider call in October where providers had he opportunity to collaborate with each other and DOR staff and provide positive feedback about the program.

The Voice Options Team translated several Consumer Facing documents to Spanish, Cambodian, Russian, Chinese and Korean. There is also an effort to include additional languages by request from Voice Options Providers. The Voice Options Team has also been working with the Deaf and Disable Telecommunication Program and the Annual Marketing Plan to create a digital print newspaper and radio advertisement in various languages to distributed throughout the state.

Finally, the Voice Options Team has been working closely to target communities such as older individuals, Native American women and African American Individuals. The plan is to incorporate newer speech applications and add diverse language opportunities in those applications.

**Agenda Item 6: Quarterly Report from Ability Tools, CFILC**

Kathrine Crowley, CFILC Ability Tools Program Manager provided members with the Ability Tools Quarterly update and members also reviewed the 41-page report and the Assistive Technology Report covering period from: July 1, 2021, to September 30, 2021. A report summary can be located at: <https://dor.ca.gov/Home/AtacMeetingArchiv>

**Agenda Item 7: Lunch 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm**

**Agenda Item 8: Update on new ATAC New Member Training Part 2**

Grant Administrator Ortega completed Part 2 of the Assistive Technology on-board Training. Members received a hand-out and discussed:

* The Purpose, Roses and Responsibilities of ATAC members
* AT Structures: Implementing Entities and Lead Agencies
* The Required State Level and State Leadership Activities in the AT Act.
* AT Act Federal Reporting Requirements

To find-out more about the training materials, please review the hand-out on the DOR website at: <https://dor.ca.gov/Home/AtacMeetingArchive>

**Agenda Item 9: 2021 AT Annual Report Discussion**

ILCAD Deputy Director Acton informed ATAC members about the importance of developing a vison for the California Assistive Technology Program that meets the needs of Californians. The vision should include the lessons learned from stakeholders that lead into the development of the AT State Plan.

Chair Grott asked members to consider the personal interest, passion and experience to determine what the ATAC members should be addressing. Member Jolley said he liked a suggestion from CFILC Executive Director Christina Mills.

Member Jolley said the ATAC should continue to branch out further and have specialized organizations and continue to engage with different geographical areas.

CFILC Executive Director Mills suggested the committee consider reaching out to the community through a Needs Assessment or a Focus Group because everyone is not aware of all the new AT that is available and how to use it. This would be a tool the ATAC members could use to figure out what consumers need.

**Agenda Item 10: ATAC Elections for Chair/ Vice-Chair**

Chair Grott requested a motion to nominate Jennifer Buzolich as Cochair of the ATAC. Member Buzolich agreed to serve in this capacity.

**Motion:** Member Walsh made a motion to nominate Jennifer Buzolich to ATAC Cochair. Barajas seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a 9-0-0 vote. (Yes – Members: Barajas, Buzolich, Certvantes, Ellis, Grable, Grott, Jolley, Shin and Walsh), (No – Members: 0), (Abstain – 0).

**Agenda Item 11: Select Meeting Dates for 2022- Discuss Tentative Dates**

There was a motion to select 2022 ATAC Meeting Dates.

* Wednesday, March 9, 2022
* Wednesday, June 8, 2022,
* Wednesday, September 7, 2022
* Wednesday, December 7, 2022

**Motion:** Member Walsh made a motion agreed on new ATAC Meeting Dates for 2022 and member Barajas seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a 7-0-2 vote. (Yes – Members: Barajas, Buzolich, Certvantes, Ellis, Grable, Jolley, and Shin), (No – Members: 0), (Abstain – Members: Grott, Walsh).

ILCAD Deputy Director Acton recognized and thanked Ray Grott for over 20 years’ service as the ATAC Chair. She thanked member Grott for his leadership and his personal experience and his willingness to step up and use the ATAC platform to advocate for people with disabilities. Ray has effectively worked with many service providers, DOR Vendors and staff over the years. Member Grott has been a strong voice and advocate for people with disability and he is someone who was willing to challenge the ATAC to ensure people with disabilities have access to services and support systems. Ray Grott, the DOR staff and executive team say thank- you for your many years of service and dedication.

Deputy Director Acton also thanked member Jennifer Walsh who has served on the ATAC as Cochair for 17 years. Member Walsh has been an effective representative for the disability community, and she remains customer centered. Member Walsh is a leader who was instrumental with real-life-experiences and conversations around supporting the needs of people with disabilities through systems and supports. Jennifer Walsh, the DOR staff and executive team say thank-you for your many years of service and dedication.

**Agenda Item 12: Updates from Committee and respective communities and agencies**

There were no report-outs.

**Agenda Item 13: Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Agenda Item 14: Call for a motion to adjourn the meeting**

**Motion:**

Member Grable made a motion to adjourn the meeting and the motion was seconded by member Jolley. The meeting was adjourned.